

Sonoma Valley Groundwater

Groundwater Planning Overview

- Diverse group meeting monthly to develop consensus on groundwater planning
- Basin management objectives available for comment
- Monitoring program focused throughout the Valley
- Draft Plan scheduled for release in December 2007

May 2007

Groundwater Plan for the Sonoma Valley

A Basin Advisory Panel, made up of 20 members from throughout the Sonoma Valley, is developing a groundwater management plan. Scheduled for release in December 2007, the plan will set goals and identify ways to protect the Sonoma Valley groundwater basin into the future.

Who's Involved

Panel members represent economic and environmental interests, groundwater users (growers, dairies, and homeowners), water suppliers, government with jurisdiction in the Valley, and the Citizen's Advisory Commission. Members worked with an independent facilitator to ensure that all key interests from the Valley were represented. The Panel has a collaborative governance structure: community representatives and agencies with jurisdiction within the Sonoma Valley are developing the groundwater management plan using consensus. In other words, members must be able to, at the very least, "live with" all elements of the plan.

The planning effort is sponsored by four cooperative partners: the Sonoma County Water Agency, the City of Sonoma, Valley of the Moon Water District, and the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District. After approval, the Panel will recommend the plan for adoption by the boards of the cooperating partners.

Key Elements of the Plan

The plan will describe existing water resources and use. It will put forth objectives for managing the basin. These objectives articulate the Panel's agreements to maintain groundwater levels, improve groundwater quality, balance use of groundwater relative to other water resources, improve community awareness, increase conservation and manage with local control.



program will build off this network adding wells through state funding or volunteers to make sure monitoring is occurring throughout the Valley and issues of concern are being addressed. Data confidentiality will also be protected for volunteers with protocols spelled out in advance.

Monitoring

The Panel is also recommending a monitoring program to learn more about the basin and to monitor the basin's "health" i.e., groundwater levels and quality. When thinking about gathering this type of data, many mistakenly worry that every well in the Valley must be monitored. In fact, the monitoring program recommends one monitoring well for approximately every 5 square miles; monitoring wells with varying depths; and monitoring wells in areas where there are issues of concern. Currently, almost 60 agency and residential wells are monitored through a voluntary program. The monitoring

Non-Regulatory Plan

The groundwater management plan is non-regulatory. However, the Panel will put forward recommendations for managing groundwater in the Valley and implementing the plan. The Panel will begin developing recommendations for implementation in the summer and fall.

Everyone is welcome to participate in Panel meetings or to provide input through Panel members. For more information or to schedule a briefing, contact project manager Bill Keene, (707) 547-1922, or chair Mark Bramfitt, (415) 973-2933.

Basin Management Objectives Ready for Input

The goal of the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Plan is to locally manage, protect, and enhance groundwater resources for all beneficial uses, in a sustainable, environmentally sound, economical, and equitable manner for generations to come.

The Basin Advisory Panel has developed a set of basin management objectives for consideration. These objectives have not yet been finalized by the Panel. After receiving feedback during summer and discussing implementation of the plan in the fall, the Panel will finalize the objectives. Objectives need to be specific and measurable, when possible, and are used to determine if achieving the stated goal.

Quantity of Groundwater

1. Maintain groundwater elevations for the support of beneficial uses of groundwater and against inelastic land surface subsidence.
2. Balance use of groundwater relative to other water sources
3. Protect against adverse impacts on surface water quantity from interaction between groundwater and surface water flows.
4. Identify and protect groundwater recharge areas and enhance the recharge of groundwater where appropriate.

Quality of Groundwater

5. Maintain or improve groundwater quality for beneficial uses.
6. Protect against adverse impacts on water quality from interaction between groundwater and surface water flows.

Community Engagement

7. Improve the community's awareness of groundwater planning, water resources and legal issues.
8. Increase water conservation and water use efficiency practices that help to achieve the plan goal.

Management Approach

9. Improve understanding of the Sonoma Valley basin groundwater resource through consistent monitoring and focused studies.
10. Manage groundwater with local control.
11. Explore, identify and maximize non-regulatory approaches to manage the groundwater resource.

How to Become Involved

Participate in a Panel Meeting

The Basin Advisory Panel meets monthly at the Sonoma Community Center. Most meetings are the 4th Thursday at 2:00. All meetings are open to the public. Check the newsletter or website for dates and locations.

Talk to Your Organizational Representative

Learn about groundwater management planning and share your perspective with a panel member.

Visit the Web Site

The Web Site is updated regularly. Read documents and check the calendar for events:

www.sonomacountywater.org/svgroundwater/

Schedule a Briefing

Basin Advisory Panel members, including Chair Mark Bramfitt, are able to conduct briefings for interested organizations. Please contact Mark at MJB9@pge.com or call Bill Keene at (707) 547-1922.

Basin Advisory Panel Members

Mark Bramfitt, Chair, SV Citizen Advisory Commission & Valley of the Moon Water District

Al Bandur, City of Sonoma Public Works

Katherine Culligan, West Valley Alliance

Nicki DiMattei, Focus4

David Goodison, Sonoma Planning and Community Development

Clarence Jenkins, Madrone Vineyard Management

Ned Hill, Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance

Vicki Hill

Jay Jasperse, SCWA

Krishna Kumar, Valley of the Moon Water District

John Macleod, Indian Springs Ranch

Lisa Micheli, Sonoma Ecology Center

Vickie Mulas, Mulas Dairy

Ed Nelson

Pete Parkinson, PRMD

Kathy Pons, Valley of the Moon Alliance

John Robb, Mission Highlands Water Company

Leandra Swent, Southern Sonoma RCD

Maggie Salenger

Tito Sasaki, North Bay Ag Alliance

Upcoming Meetings

May 31

June 28

September 27

October 25

November 29

2:00-5:00

Sonoma
Community Center
276 East Napa St